

# OLYMPIC COAST NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

## OLYMPIC COAST DISCOVERY CENTER



VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2008

### New NOAA Research Ship Dedicated



On August 13 NOAA commissioned its newest research vessel *Okeanos Explorer*. Sister ship to the *McArthur II*, the *Okeanos* has several exciting new features including two ROVs capable of operating to depths of 6,000 meters, hull mounted multibeam sonar for high-resolution maps of the seafloor, and Dynamic Positioning to keep the ship in place while operating ROVs. Watching from shore, it will be easy to distinguish the *Okeanos* from other NOAA research vessels by the large satellite dome, part of the high-bandwidth satellite communication system that will stream seafloor images over Internet connections to bring live ocean exploration into classrooms and living rooms world wide.

In operation, one ROV is suspended above the other and serves to illuminate and image the surroundings. Suspended below is the primary ROV, equipped with the same lights and cameras, as well as special sensors and manipulators for collecting data and samples.

Tucked into and operating from the main ROV is a 60-pound xBot, or penetrating ROV, that will provide exploration access to confined areas where it could be difficult or unwise to send the larger and more expensive main ROV. The battery-powered xBot also has lights and cameras, but of lower resolution than the other vehicles.

The *Okeanos Explorer* will complete field tests in the OCNMS for the remainder of 2008 and into 2009 before going into full operation next summer. Go to <http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/okeanos/welcome.html> for more detailed information.





### **Volunteer recognition event in October**

Our annual volunteer recognition event will take place Tuesday, October 21 from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. We will have a potluck supper followed by a report on the summer field season with Ed and Mary Sue, special volunteer recognition that you won't want to miss, as well as a few surprises tucked into the evening. In order to prepare for this event, we need to know who is attending by October 15. Please call the office 457-6622 ext 31, or send an email to [janet.lamont@noaa.gov](mailto:janet.lamont@noaa.gov) to let me know that you are coming and what you would like to bring.



### **OCDC on fall schedule**

After Labor Day the Olympic Coast Discovery Center will be open Thursday through Sunday from 11:00 to 5:00 through the end of September. Our Americorps students have all returned to the classroom, so we really need people to volunteer for shifts this month.



### **Get ready for CrabFest!**

The Dungeness Crab and Seafood Festival takes over the Port Angeles waterfront on the second weekend in October. This year the focus of the OCNMS display will be marine debris, and especially the damage caused by plastic shopping bags. I promised Jacqueline that I will cover the booth for the weekend, but I would love to have others join me. We will be handing out the remainder of our reusable bags to people who promise to use them.